

## **Current Happenings with In Home TN in Northeast**

In March 2013, the Northeast region held two large community stakeholder meetings where a combined approximately 200 partners participated in an open, documented discussion around the ability of the community to provide for the needs of the region's most vulnerable families and children. After the meeting, the region's In Home Tennessee leadership team (comprised of both DCS and community partners) reviewed the data collected and chose to focus on the priorities outlined below.

### *Current Areas of Focus:*

After the community meetings in 2013, Northeast prioritized and has been working on the following areas in the region: **Cultural Awareness, Substance Abuse Services, and Knowledge of Services.**

The **Cultural Awareness** workgroup continues to partner with the East Tennessee State University Social Work Department to conduct trainings for community members and child welfare workers around the impact/trauma involved in separating families (due to children entering the state's custody). The group hopes to help participants understand the dire need to work with families to get the services needed to assist in keeping families together.

The **Substance Abuse Services** workgroup is focusing on work with babies born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS). Families Free, a local substance abuse provider, has partnered with the Department to expand services in the region and develop a training DVD to help educate community members and child welfare workers about this current epidemic in the Eastern regions of Tennessee.

The **Knowledge of Services** workgroup is focused on ensuring child welfare professionals are aware of the resources for families/children in the area and that they are able to link families and make referrals for services. This group partnered with Northeast State Community College to create an electronic, region-wide resource guide that can easily be accessed and maintained. Representatives of the group also frequently attend conferences and other community events to raise awareness about prevention services and the efforts of In Home Tennessee with DCS and partners.

## **The Beginning of In Home TN in Northeast**

The Northeast region began the In Home Tennessee enhancement in March 2013. A follow up community stakeholder meeting was held in September 2013 where a summary of the findings assessment discussions were presented. Areas chosen to be addressed are discussed above.

## **Get involved!**

Contact the Regional Project Lead, Rhonda Gilley at [Rhonda.Gilley@tn.gov](mailto:Rhonda.Gilley@tn.gov) to get involved with In Home Tennessee in Northeast.

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